

Some rhyming Sayings in Malay.

By A. W. HAMILTON.

From time to time the diligent listener and gleaner of unconsidered trifles will during his intercourse with Malays happen upon little scraps of proverbial lore or the rhyming equivalents for such which are part of the common stock in trade of conversation but are not to be found in any printed work on the language.

Of such are the following which have been collected no further afield than in Singapore and Penang and in the localities where they are current it is only necessary to quote the first line to convey the meaning contained in the second.

1. Pinjam ekor sěmbilang;
Pinjam pinjam hilang.
To lend the tail of a sěmbilang fish:
To lend continuously is to lose.

A caustic remark applicable to a goodhearted person who has lent an article once too often, or to an importunate borrower.

2. Měrpai měmbunoh kěra;
Bělum mati bělum jěra.
The pigeon slays the kěra monkey:
Only when dead will you profit by experience.

A saying applicable to a person or child who persists in a course from which he has been advised to desist.

3. Takok takal muka pintu;
Orang nakal memang bėgitu.
Cleave the block in the doorway:
That is the inevitable result of being naughty.

A reproof administered to a mischievous child who has perhaps fallen down and is crying over a trifling hurt.

4. Ikan tokak makan měranggong;
Sědap těkak badan měnanggong.
The tokak fish bite two at a time:
If you indulge your appetite your body must bear the consequences.

A jibe at the expense of a person suffering from the effects of a debauch of any description.

5. Tua tua kěladi;
 Makin tua makin jadi.
 Old as an aroid tuber ages;
 The older, the more there is of you (i.e. the worse you
 become) or
 Tua tua lěngkuas;
 Makin tua makin buas.
 To age as a lěngkuas ages:
 The older you are the wilder.

A scathing remark sometimes addressed to a man who on account of his years ought to know better than to indulge in the frolics and pursuits of youth.

6. Kalau ta' chěngal giyam;
 Kalau ta' kěnal diam.
 If its not chěngai wood it will be giam:
 If you dont know, keep quiet.

A joking repartee often addressed to a person who is at a loss to answer a query as to the name of a tree or other object.

7. Bukan kětam tarah;
 Bukan makan muntah ka darah.
 It has not been planed only rough hewn:
 It has not been a feed but an orgy.

An appreciative remark after a plentiful repast to which justice has been done.

8. Měrono Měrene sa gantang garam;
 Kasana Kamari hari sudah malam.
 Come here, go there, a gantang of salt:
 Thither and Hither and the day is done.

A reproof to a laggard who occupying himself in small inconsequential matters is wasting the precious hours of daylight which ought to be devoted to some more important task in hand.

9. Santan tairu gula mėlaka;
 Pěrěmpuan ta' malu jantan ta' kata.
 Coconut milk, curds and jaggery:
 If the woman be immodest, what need be said of the man.

An apt reply to a woman who complains of forwardness on the part of a man to which in the opinion of the speaker she has laid herself open by her own behaviour.

10. Měntimun bongkok di balek tiang;
 Ayam bėrkokok alamat nak siang.
 A bent cucumber behind the post:
 When the cock crows it is the sign of dawn.

A line sometimes quoted as a signal for a lover not to delay his departure or in a meaningless context.

11. Buah sěntul buah kěchapi;
 Kěpala gondol di makan api.
 Sěntul and kěchapi fruit:
 A bald top consumed by fire.

A rhyming skit on a bald head.

12. Minyak sanyong-nyong tanak di bělanga běsi;
 Hang nyom mai aku nyom pi.
 Sanyong-nyong oil boiled in an iron pot:
 Come smiling to me and I will go smiling to you.

A facetious remark put in the form of a charm for inducing a meeting between a man and a maid.

Bishop G. F. Hose.

Since the last Journal passed into the press the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society has lost its senior member, the Right Reverend George Frederick Hose, who died at Normandy near Guildford, Surrey, on March the 26th. Born on September 3rd, 1838, he became Chaplain of Malacca in 1868, Archdeacon of Singapore in 1874, and Bishop of Singapore, Labuan and Sarawak in 1881. He retired in 1908. While Archdeacon of Singapore our Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society was founded by his efforts; and he was our first President. An account of his work in the East will be found in the 54th part of the Journal.

He was one of those who chose the Branch's name: but before his death he had given approval to the change whereby we become the Malayan Branch;—a change which will take place with the first of next year, so that this Journal is the last that will appear under the familiar title. The series which it concludes may be dedicated appropriately to his memory.